

## Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

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TAGS: UNGA, SF, PORG

SUBJECT: STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR MCHENRY ON APARTHEID IN  
SOUTH AFRICA

1. FOLLOWING IS A STATEMENT DELIVERED BY AMBASSADOR  
DONALD F. MCHENRY, US REPRESENTATIVE IN PLENARY AT  
UNGA ON THE POLICIES OF APARTHEID OF THE GOVERNMENT  
OF SOUTH AFRICA, NOVEMBER 17, 1977.

QUOTE

STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR DONALD F. MCHENRY, UNITED STATES  
REPRESENTATIVE IN PLENARY, ON THE POLICIES OF APARTHEID  
OF THE GOVERNMENT OF SOUTH AFRICA, NOVEMBER 17, 1977.

MUCH HAS BEEN SAID FROM THIS PODIUM AND IN OTHER UN BODIES  
ABOUT THE UNHAPPY SITUATION IN SOUTH AFRICA. OUR RENEWED  
CONSIDERATION OF THE SITUATION IN SOUTH AFRICA FOLLOWS A  
YEAR IN WHICH WE HAVE LOOKED IN VAIN FOR SIGNS THAT THE  
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SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT WOULD HEED THE WARNINGS OF THE  
SOWETO RIOTS AND MOVE TO MAKE FUNDAMENTAL STRUCTURAL CHANGES  
LEADING TO AN ABANDONMENT OF APARTHEID.

MY OWN GOVERNMENT'S POLICIES HAVE BEEN STATED IN DETAIL BY  
PRESIDENT CARTER, BY VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE, BY OTHER U.S.  
OFFICIALS AND BY THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES. WE

OPPOSE APARTHEID AND EVERYTHING FOR WHICH IT STANDS. APARTHEID IS A BLIGHT UPON THE CONTINENT OF AFRICA AND ON THE HISTORY OF MANKIND. WE HAVE SOLEMNLY WARNED THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT THAT FAILURE TO END RACIAL DISCRIMINATION AND TO MAKE PROGRESS TOWARD FULL POLITICAL PARTICIPATION WOULD RESULT IN A DETERIORATION OF OUR RELATIONS. AND, IN LIGHT OF THE EVIDENTLY CONSCIOUS DECISION OF THAT GOVERNMENT NOT TO CHANGE ITS COURSE BUT IN FACT TO MOVE MASSIVELY IN THE DIRECTION OF FURTHER REPRESSION, THE UNITED STATES HAS TAKEN A SERIES OF STEPS TO GIVE EFFECT TO OUR WARNING.

IN THE UNITED NATIONS WE SUPPORTED MAKING MANDATORY THE VOLUNTARY EMBARGO ON ARMS AND MILITARY EQUIPMENT WHICH THE UNITED STATES HAS OBSERVED SINCE 1963. WITHIN HOURS OF THE DECISION BY THE SECURITY COUNCIL, THE UNITED STATES MOVED TO PREVENT ANY SHIPMENT OF SPARE PARTS WHICH WERE DESTINED FOR SOUTH AFRICA.

BILATERALLY, WE HAVE TAKEN ADDITIONAL STEPS TOWARD BRINGING OUR RELATIONSHIPS WITH SOUTH AFRICA INTO LINE WITH THOSE VALUES AND INTERESTS WHICH WE HAVE IN COMMON. THOSE STEPS INCLUDE THE WITHDRAWAL OF OUR NAVAL ATTACHE AND, IN RELATION TO A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF OUR ECONOMIC REALATIONS WITH SOUTH AFRICA, THE RECALL OF OUR COMMERICAL OFFICER IN JOHANNESBURG. AS MANY OF YOU KNOW, I WAS AMONG THOSE REPRESENTING THE UNITED STATES AT THE FUNERAL OF STEVE BIKO. WITH THOUSANDS UNCLASSIFIED

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OF OTHERS I SHARED THE SENSE OF LOSS AND MOURNED THE FURTHER REDUCTION OF THE RANKS OF MODERATION AND REASON IN A SOCIETY ALREADY DESPERATELY DEPLETED OF THOSE ATTRIBUTES.

THE TRAGEDY OF HIS DEATH WAS NOT SIMPLY IN THE UNFORTUNATE CIRCUMSTANCES AND INHUMANE MANNER IN WHICH HE WAS ARRESTED, IMPRISONED, AND DIED. IT WAS ALSO IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH HE LIVED -- A YOUNG INTELLECTUAL -- OF INTERNATIONAL REPUTATION WHO HAD SUCCESSFULLY SURVIVED THE NUMEROUS LAWS OF APARTHEID -- EVEN SURVIVED BANTU EDUCATION. IN MOST OTHER SOCIETIES STEVE BIKO WOULD HAVE TAKEN HIS RIGHTFUL PLACE AMONG THE LEADERSHIP OF HIS COUNTRY BUT IN HIS BOUNTIFULLY ENDOWED NATIVELAND HE WAS BANISHED TO A LIFE OF POVERTY, REPRESSION AND INHUMANE DEATH.

BIKO'S JAILERS EFFECTIVELY SNUFFED OUT VOICE. BUT SURELY SOUTH AFRICA'S FRIGHTENED WHITES, EVEN FROM THE SANCTUARY OF THEIR HOMES, MUST HAVE SEEN AS THOSE OF US PRESENT AT THE FUNERAL CAN ATTEST, THAT THE MAJOR EVENT OF BIKO'S FUNERAL WAS NOT HIS REMOVAL FROM THE RANKS BY INTERNMENT BUT THE REINFORCEMENT OF THOSE RANKS BY THOUSANDS OF OTHERS, PERHAPS LESS MODERATE, LESS PATIENT, LESS INTELLECUTALLY

ENDOWED AND LESS INTERESTED IN A PEACEFUL ACCOMODATION.

INDEED THE PROTESTS AND HUNDREDS OF DEATHS IN SOWETO, THE DEATH OF BIKO AND THE BANNINGS AND DETENTIONS OF OCTOBER 19 MAY ALREADY HAVE SET IN MOTION THAT PHENOMENON PREDICTED LONG AGO: A SELF-PERPETUATING CYCLE OF REPRESSION AND VIOLENCE. THE REVOLT MAY WELL BE, AS ALAN PATON PREDICTED IN CRY THE BELOVED COUNTRY: BY THE TIME WHITES HAVE LEARNED TO LOVE, SOUTH AFRICA'S BLACKS MAY HAVE LEARNED TO HATE.

MR. PRESIDENT, I DOUBT THAT EITHER ANOTHER TORRENT OF RESOLUTIONS FROM THIS BODY OR FURTHER INTEMPERATE RHETORIC OF THE CURRENT POLITICAL CAMPAIGN IN SOUTH AFRICA WILL CONTRIBUTE POSITIVELY TO A RESOLUTION OF THE PROBLEMS WHICH EXIST IN UNCLASSIFIED

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SOUTH AFRICA. THE QUESTION ARISES WHAT CAN WE IN THIS ORGANIZATION DO TO BE OF ASSISTANCE IN THESE TRAGIC CIRCUMSTANCES.

-- WE MUST RESIST THE TEMPTATION TO EMPHASIZE COERCIVE AND PUNITIVE MEASURES BUT WE MUST NOT LOSE SIGHT OF THE FACT THAT, FAR FROM INTERFERENCE IN INTERNAL AFFAIRS, WE AND SOUTH AFRICA HAVE SOLEMN OBLIGATIONS UNDER THE UNITED NATIONS CHARTER TO PROMOTE RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND TO PRESERVE INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY.

-- WE MUST REASSURE SOUTH AFRICA -- AS AFRICA DID IN THE LUSAKA MANIFESTO ALMOST 9 YEARS AGO -- THAT WE STAND READY TO BE OF EVERY POSSIBLE ASSISTANCE AND TO MAINTAIN THE WARMEST OF RELATIONS. BUT SOUTH AFRICA CAN NEVER EXPECT NORMAL AND WARM RELATIONS WITH THE COMMUNITY OF NATIONS SO LONG AS IT INSISTS ON FOLLOWING PRACTICES SO UNIVERSALLY REPUGNANT.

-- WE MUST MAKE IT CLEAR TO THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT THAT WE RECOGNIZE THAT HISTORY AND CIRCUMSTANCES HAVE COMBINED TO CREATE A UNIQUE PROBLEM OF GREAT COMPLEXITY NOT CAPABLE OF EASY OR INSTANTANEOUS SOLUTION. BUT WE MUST ALSO STATE THAT THE RESOLUTION OF EVERY PROBLEM REQUIRES A BEGINNING AND EXPRESS OUR VIEW THAT THE SITUATION IS SUCH THAT BOLD STATEMENTSHIP IS NOW ESSENTIAL.

-- WE MUST INSIST THAT THE WELL BEING OF SOUTH AFRICANS IS OUR PRIMARY GOAL AND WARN AGAINST THOSE WHO WOULD FISH IN TROUBLED WATERS IN ORDER TO REAP IDEOLOGICAL OR POLITICAL ADVANTAGE. BUT WE MUST BE EQUALLY INSISTENT THAT IDEOLOGICAL FEARS CANNOT BE USED AS AN EXCUSE TO DELAY NECESSARY CHANGES.

-- WE MUST RECOGNIZE THAT IN THE FINAL ANALYSIS A LASTING UNCLASSIFIED

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SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEMS OF SOUTH AFRICA MUST EMERGE FROM A  
DIALOGUE AMONG ALL OF THE CITIZENS OF THAT COUNTRY. THE  
INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY HAS NO MORE RIGHT TO IMPOSE A POLITICAL  
ORGANIZATION ON THAT COUNTRY THAN DOES SOUTH AFRICA'S WHITE  
MINORITY HAVE THE RIGHT TO IMPOSE UPON THE BLACK MAJORITY.

-- FINALLY, WE MUST RETAIN OUR HOPE THAT THE SPIRAL OF  
REPRESSION AND VIOLENCE WILL END, THAT SOUTH AFRICANS WILL  
FINALLY REALIZE THAT JUST AS OTHER SOCIETIES, MY OWN INCLUDED,  
FOUND IT POSSIBLE TO MAKE PROGRESS TOWARD THE RESOLUTION OF  
THE SEEMINGLY INTRACTABLE, SO CAN SOUTH AFRICAS, PROVIDED  
THEY WILL.

UNQUOTE  
LEONARD

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED.

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